

The "Missing™" Program

"Missing™" is a computer game based on the true story of a thirteen year old boy who was lured and kidnapped by an adult he met over the Internet.

Unfortunately this is not an isolated story. In 2002, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reportedly opened 2,782 new cases of Internet Luring.

This number has risen dramatically and continues to rise. It is imperative that we, as parents, educators, and law enforcement officials, join forces and develop a community-wide strategy to protect our children from on-line predators.

That is where this program comes in. The "Missing™" Program is an innovative computer game designed for children entering their Middle School years. It enables and encourages children to effectively educate themselves as to the dangers that lurk on the Internet. Additionally it provides adults with the opportunity to open a dialogue with children regarding Internet Safety.

*Together, we can form a united front
against on-line predators.*

**For more information on this program,
please contact:
www.webwisekids.org**

THE "MISSING™" PROGRAM



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District Attorney

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AN INNOVATIVE COMPUTER GAME
ABOUT INTERNET KIDNAPPING



DESIGNED TO KEEP KIDS
SAFE WHILE ON THE
INTERNET

SPONSORED BY:

TIMOTHY J. CRUZ

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
PLYMOUTH COUNTY**

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A MESSAGE FROM
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TIM CRUZ



The Internet was designed to provide access to useful resources and information in the comfort of our own homes.

Unfortunately, the Internet also creates a variety of dangerous risks and situations that many parents are not aware of. It enables sexual predators into our homes to commit a new High-tech crime called "Internet Luring".

In recent years, the criminal justice community has begun to gather statistics on this new crime. A study conducted for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children showed that 1 in 5 children have been contacted sexually over the Internet. 3% of those that responded had been solicited aggressively with offers of travel, money or gifts. Three-quarters of these children did not tell their parents for fear that they would lose their Internet privileges.

"Internet Luring" is a difficult crime for police to solve. It appears that the child may have run away. Often there is little physical evidence left at the scene, and few, if any witnesses. The law enforcement and legal community have come to realize that we alone cannot protect our children. That is why I took the initiative to have Plymouth County designated as a Pilot Site for the international launch of the "Missing™" project.

Due to the success of the Plymouth County Model, The Entertainment Software Association, the sponsor for the "Missing™" program, has awarded the State of Massachusetts with a grant so that this project is available to every middle school system in Massachusetts.

If you would like more information regarding this project or other resources in my office, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz, Plymouth County District Attorney

"MISSING™"

AN EXCERPT FROM THE GAME
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"Zack's a great kid. He's just having a bad year. His parents have split up. His Dad is stressed, taking care of things at home and at work. He's been working late at the office every night. And now he's cancelled their vacation.

So Zack is steaming mad. He's started skipping school, sleeping in until noon. He spends all his waking hours on his computer, building his own website. And he's so talented. He designs amazing games, starring a fantasy character named Zackman.

Zack's also building a family photo album. Not your normal boring snapshots. He's animated them so they're really funny. The problem is, anyone who visits the website can find out everything about Zack: his name, address, school, sports... even family secrets.

While surfing the Internet, Zack discovers a chat room called Zine Scene where he can yak with kids. A lot of them are just boasting. But there's one guy called Fantasma who designs a website, California Dreaming, all about great clothes and beaches around San Diego. This zine is so cool! Rollerblading at Pacific Beach, Surfing at La Jolla.

Fantasma is an even better animator than Zack, but he doesn't boast or anything. He sends Zack stuff to help him out. Like new animation software. And he's really sympathetic about the problems with Zack's Dad. So when Fantasma offers him a job, Zack jumps at the chance. Well, wouldn't you?"

This program is made possible through a grant from the Entertainment Software Association Foundation

"MISSING™"

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE GAME
©LIVEWIRES DESIGN, LTD., 2001

The "Missing™" game is an innovative computer game, developed on 2 CD-ROMs. The game takes students on a journey where they assume the role of a detective assigned to help a family find their child. The child has run away to meet a man that he has become acquainted with after numerous chat-room sessions on the Internet.

The game begins with a filmed plea from the boy's father. The student detectives must delve into the relationship between the boy and the chat-room predator and decode the messages which have been exchanged between the two. The students piece together a set of clues, which ultimately leads them to San Diego, California where they successfully track down the missing boy.

The mission of the game is for children to educate themselves as to the dangers that exist on the Internet. This method has been proven to be more effective than conventional methods of education where children are given a set of rules and guidelines and told to obey them. Students learn firsthand through Zack's experience, how easy it is for a perpetrator to acquire personal information that could ultimately put either themselves or their families at risk.

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MISSING



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